

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus comprising:

an electrostatic latent image carrier for carrying an electrostatic latent image on a peripheral surface thereof;

5 a plurality of development units each accommodating a toner and adapted to develop the electrostatic latent image by the toner;

a development unit holder capable of holding said plurality of development units; and

10 a control unit for said development unit holder for controlling an operation of said development unit holder and for selectively changing over said development unit used in development among said plurality of development units,

wherein said image formation apparatus is provided with
15 an identifying device for identifying at least color information on the toner accommodated in said development unit,

said development unit holder is capable of holding at least two development units accommodating the toner of a same color, and

20 said control unit identifies said development units of the same color based on the color information identified by said identifying device, and controls the operation of said development unit holder so as to effect monochrome development by using said at least two development units.

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2. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said development unit has storage means for storing the color information, and the color information is identified by said identifying device.

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3. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said development unit holder is a rotary body which selectively changes over said development unit used in development as said rotary body is rotatively driven, and said rotary body moves
10 any one of said plurality of development units to a position opposing said electrostatic latent image carrier as said development unit holder is rotatively driven by said control unit.

15 4. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the operation of said development unit holder is controlled at a predetermined timing by said control unit, and during development by a monochromatic toner, a changeover is made to another development unit accommodating the toner of the same
20 color as the toner used in the development.

5. The image forming apparatus according to claim 4, wherein when development by the monochromatic toner continues, the predetermined timing is set to a time when a predetermined
25 number of pages has reached a predetermined value.

6. The image forming apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said development unit has storage means for storing an amount of toner consumed, and the predetermined timing is set to a
5 time when an amount of toner consumed has reached a predetermined value.

7. A method of forming an image by an image forming apparatus in which color information on a toner accommodated in a
10 plurality of development units held in a development unit holder is identified by an identifying device, and said development unit used in development is selectively changed over among said plurality of development units by a control unit for controlling said development unit holder, so as to
15 effect development, comprising the steps of:

identifying the color information on the toner accommodated in said development unit by said identifying device; and

20 identifying said development units of a same color based on the color information, and controlling the operation of said development unit holder by said control unit so as to effect monochrome development by using at least two of said development units accommodating the toner of the same color.